

UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
LOGISTICS OPERATIONS SCHOOL  
MARINE CORPS COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT SCHOOLS  
TRAINING COMMAND  
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B302-1

**STUDENT OUTLINE**

**LOGISTICS**

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1. **LOGISTICS DEFINED.** Logistics is "the science of planning and carrying out the movement and maintenance of forces". In its most comprehensive sense, logistics provides material support, health services support, facilities support, and service support.

2. **MARINE CORPS LOGISTICS.** By law, joint doctrine, and in cooperation with US Navy, the Marine Corps has made logistical self-sufficiency an essential element of the MAGTF's war fighting capabilities. This concept allows commands and supporting establishments to support the rapid deployment, and unique demands that are inherent to a MAGTF. Moreover, depending on it's size the MAGTF's logistics capabilities allow it to sustain itself for operations for up to 60 days, thus allowing external support agencies and channels to organize and establish a logistical pipeline to support the deployed MAGTF.

3. **LEVELS OF LOGISTICS.** The strategic, operational, and tactical levels of logistics function as a coordinated whole, rather than as separate entities. The Marine Corps normally focuses on the tactical level, it is imperative that Marines understand the interaction of each level. Moreover, specific logistic needs are tailored to meet the conditions and the level of war under which a military force operates:

a. **Strategic Logistics (National level):** Strategic logistics supports organizing, training, and equipping the forces that are required to further national interest. It links the national economic base or infrastructure to military operations. The combination of strategic resources and the distribution processes represents our total national capabilities. Strategic logistics capabilities are generated

based on guidance from the National Command Authorities and logistics requirements identified by the operating forces.

b. Operational Logistics (Theater level). This level links tactical requirements to strategic capabilities to accomplish operational goals and objectives. It includes the support required to sustain campaigns and major operations. Operational logistics supports conducting campaigns and providing theater-wide logistics support that is required for weeks or months. Operational logistics encompasses the total scope of activity to form, equip, sustain, disengage, and disestablish military forces. The overall logistic system is the foundation for CSS to the operating forces.

c. Tactical level of war (CSS). Tactical logistics includes organic unit capabilities and combat service support activities necessary to support military operations. It is focused to support the commander's intent and concept of operations. Logistics at this level involves coordination of functions required to sustain and move units, personnel, equipment, and supplies. Such functions must deliver flexible and responsive combat service support, which meet the needs of operating forces engaged in combat operations.

**4. PRINCIPLES OF LOGISTICS SUPPORT**. There are seven principles of logistics support that apply to all levels of logistics; attaining these principles is essential to operational success. These principles, like the principles of war, are a guide for planning, organizing, managing, and execution. They are not rigid rules, nor will they apply at all times. As few as one or two may apply in any given situation.

a. Responsiveness. This is the keystone of the seven principles. All other principles are irrelevant if logistics support does not support the commander's concept of operations.

b. Simplicity. Simplicity fosters efficiency in planning and execution of logistics. Mission type orders and standardized procedures facilitate and simplify logistics support.

c. Flexibility. Allows the logistics structure and procedures to adapt to changing situations and mission requirements. Logistics plans and operations must be flexible to achieve both responsiveness and economy.

d. Economy. Economy is providing sufficient support at the least cost without impairing the mission or jeopardizing lives.

e. Attainability. This is the ability to provide the minimum, essential supplies and services required to conduct combat operations. The commander's logisticians develop the concept of logistics supportability; provides the logistics estimate.

f. Sustainability. The ability to maintain logistics support throughout the entire MAGTF is sustainability. It focuses on the commander's long-term objectives and capabilities of the force. Sustainability is the greatest challenge for the logistician, who not only must attain minimum, combat essential levels to initiate combat, they must upon levels to sustain the MAGTF.

g. Survivability. The capacity of the organization to protect its forces and resources. Logistics units and installations are high-value targets and as such must be protected to prevent the enemy from disrupting the logistical pipeline.

5. FUNCTIONAL AREAS OF LOGISTICS. Logistics is normally categorized in six functional areas: **supply, maintenance, transportation, general engineering, health services, and services**. Some functions also have sub functions. While each functional area is essential, all functions must be integrated into the overall logistics support operation to ensure total support of MAGTF operations. Outlined below are each of the functional areas and their sub functions.

a. Supply

- Requirements determination: routine, pre-planned, or long range.
- Procurement
- Distribution
- Disposal
- Storage
- Salvage

b. Maintenance. Maintenance involves those actions taken to retain or restore material to serviceable condition.

- Inspection & classification
- Servicing, adjusting, & tuning

- Testing & calibration
- Repair
- Modification
- Rebuilding & overhaul
- Reclamation
- Recovery & evacuation

c. Transportation. Transportation is more than simply moving from point "a" to point "b". Transporting a MAGTF could involve all means of transport such as highways, railroads, waterways, pipelines, oceans, or via both commercial and strategic air. Transportation support in regards to an expeditionary MAGTF includes more than the basic means of transportation. Methods to control and manage these assets are **sub-functions of transportation** and they are:

- Embarkation
- Landing Support
- Motor Transport
- Port & Terminal Operations
- Air delivery
- Material Handling
- Freight & passenger transportation

d. General Engineering. General engineering supports an entire MAGTF. It encompasses a wide range of tasks performed in the rear area that serve to sustain forward combat units. Functions of general engineering include:

- Engineer reconnaissance
- Horizontal & vertical construction
- Facilities maintenance
- Demolition & obstacle removal
- Explosive ordnance disposal

e. Health Services. Health services support is primarily provided the Medical and Dental battalions located within each FSSG. Health services deploy smaller, mobile elements that provide essential care in theater. Health service support resources are flexible and adaptable which allows them to be tailored to the mission, which could range from major theater war to military operations other than war. The functions of health services are:

- Health maintenance
- Casualty collection

- Casualty treatment
- Temporary casualty holding
- Casualty evacuation

f. Services. Marine Corps Doctrinal Pub 4 discusses a variety of nonmaterial and support activities that are identified as services. These services are executed in varying degrees by each of the military services, the Marine Corps supporting establishment, and the MAGTF. An understanding of the division of labor and interrelationship of the responsibilities and staff cognizance for specific services is essential to accomplish services as a function. Centralization of these services within the FSSG is not to imply sole logistic staff cognizance for execution of the task. Services provided are:

- Disbursing
- Postal
- Legal
- Security Support
- Exchange
- Civil affairs
- Graves registration

**REFERENCES:**

MCWP 4-1, LOGISTICS OPERATIONS